

House Republican Press Release

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House Passes Critical Stem Cell Legislation



Aman Supports State Investment In Research That Could Cure Many Diseases

HARTFORD - State Representative Bill Aman (R-South Windsor) voted this week to approve a measure (Senate Bill 934) that would permit stem cell research and prohibit human cloning in Connecticut - and could lead to the development of new approaches to treating a variety of deadly diseases and debilitating conditions.

The legislation will make state funding available for embryonic and human adult stem cell research that could result in the development of therapies and cures for such diseases and illnesses as diabetes, Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's Disease, strokes, coronary heart disease, Lou Gehrig's Disease, deafness, damaged lung tissue, breast cancer, leukemia, Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, eye diseases and multiple myeloma.

"This bill is a critical investment by the state toward finding important cures that will have a significant positive impact on many lives," said Representative Aman. "I hope that it will lay the groundwork for further future investment in this research by the state of Connecticut."

Representative Aman spoke on the floor of the House in support of an amendment that would have provided severe penalties of up to five years in prison, fines of fifty thousand dollars, or both for individuals doing research on embryonic stem cells in violation of the provisions of the bill. That amendment failed narrowly on a 74-76 vote.

"I would have preferred the bill with that amendment," said Representative Aman. "While it is highly unlikely that a researcher who is performing embryonic stem cell research in good faith would violate these provisions, it would have sent a strong message that the state is serious about the ethical considerations of stem cell research."

The bill as passed would:

- Prohibit the cloning of a human being and make violations punishable by a fine of up to \$100,000, imprisonment of up to 10 years, or both.

- Establish a “Stem Cell Research Fund” and appropriate \$20 million from the General Fund to it for the 2005 fiscal year, and direct that \$10 million be disbursed from the Tobacco Settlement Fund to the Stem Cell Research Fund for fiscal years 2008 to 2015.
- Require that for fiscal years 2006 to 2015, at least \$10 million be made available from the research fund for grants to eligible institutions for embryonic or human adult stem cell research.

The bill now heads to Governor M. Jodi Rell for her signature.